

Message Text

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USIA WASHDC

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BBAK, PFOR, NL, US

SUBJ: LOCKHEED AND THE PRINCE: AND ON IT GOES

REF: THE HAGUE 4716

1. ALTHOUGH THE INTENSE INTEREST IN THE BERNHARD AFFAIR OF THE FIRST FEW DAYS HAS FADED, AND MANY WISH IT COULD BE PUSHED COMPLETELY INTO THE BACKGROUND, THE WEALTH OF MATERIAL PUBLISHED IN THE DONNER COMMISSION REPORT HAS PROVIDED GRIST FOR THE MILL OF FURTHER INQUIRIES. JOURNALISTS AND PARLIAMENTARIANS ARE NOW BEGINNING TO TRACK DOWN ANDY LEADS WHICH BEAR ON THE CASE.

2. A MENTION IN THE REPORT OF LOCKHEED CONTACTS WITH PARLIAMENTARIANS HAS BEEN CLEARED UP WITH THE RELEASE OF TELEGRAMS CONCERNING A VISIT TO THE LOCKHEED PLANT BY VAN ELSSEN AND
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PLOEG OF THE DEFENSE COMMITTEE. DE VRIES OF THE SAME COMMITTEE

WAS ALSO MENTIONED AS BEING IMPORTANT TO LOCKHEEDS EFFORTS TO SELL P-3 ORIONS TO THE DUTCH NAVY. THOSE THREE PARLIAMENTARIANS HAVE VISITED A LARGE NUMBER OF DEFENSE PLANTS IN THE US AND EUROPE IN RECENT YEARS ON COMMITTEE BUSINESS, A FACT WHICH THEY POINTED OUT TO INQUIRING JOURNALISTS.

3. PARLIAMENTARIANS TOOK PRINCE BERNHARD OUT OF SPOTLIGHT FOR ONE DAY, BUT HE IS BACK IN IT TODAY WITH RELEASE BY MOD REDELING OF LETTERS BETWEEN FORMER GON AND FRG DEFENSE MINISTERS DEN TOOM AND SCHMIDT. IN JANUARY 1971 LETTER TO SCHMIDT SAID THAT PRINCE BERNHARD HAD "BROACHED WITH ME RECENTLY THE TOPIC OF THE PROJECT OF THE AMERICAN NORTHROP CORPORATION", A REFERENCE TO A POSSIBLE FRG CONTRIBUTION TOWARD COBRA DEVELOPMENT COSTS IF THE PLANE WOULD HAVE BEEN SELECTED BY EUROPEAN GOVTS.

4. DONNER COMMISSION REPORT DID NOT DELVE INTO PRINCES RELATIONS WITH NORTHROP EXECUTIVES TO ANY GREAT EXTENT NOR DID IT COVER THE COMPETITION FOR REPLACEMENT OF THE STARFIGHTERS. THESE "OMISSIONS" ARE NOW BEGINNING TO BE QUESTIONED BY SOME. PARLIAMENTARY LEFT WING HAS TRIED FOR SOME TIME TO GET APPROVAL FOR AN INVESTIGATION OF THE STARFIGHTER REPLACEMENT HISTORY, BUT HAS BEEN BLOCKED BY THE DEFENSE COMMITTEE. THE EFFORT WILL NOW BE MADE AGAIN. THE PRINCES TIES TO NORTHROP, WHICH CAME TO LIGHT AS A RESULT OF LAST YEARS US INVESTIGATION INTO THE AIRCRAFT COMPANY, MAY ALSO BE QUESTIONED NOW THAT HE IS SHOWN TO HAVE GONE TO BAT FOR THE COBRA WITH SCHMIDT.

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